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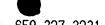
AMENDMENTS

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend Claims 11 and 15 and cancel Claims 19-22 as shown below.

- 11. (Currently Amended) An optical meter that can determine when sample has been applied to the surface of a test strip inserted into it, said meter comprising:
- (a) means for collecting reflectance data from a region of said meter occupied by a sample application location of said test strip when said test strip is present in said meter, wherein said reflectance data is collected over a period of time ranging from a time prior to introduction of said test strip into said optical meter to a time after application of said sample to said sample application location, wherein said means comprises:
 - (i) a light source for irradiating said region of said meter; and
 - (ii) a detector for detecting reflected light from said region of said meter;
 - (b) means for comparing said reflectance data to a reference value to obtain a sample present signal; and
- (c) means for actuating a fluid sample movement means of said test strip in response to said sample present signal.
- 12. (Original) The optical meter according to Claim 11, wherein said light source is a source of visible light.
- 13. (Original) The optical meter according to Claim 12, wherein said light has a wavelength ranging from about 550nm to 590nm.
- 14. (Original) The optical meter according to Claim 11, wherein said meter further comprises said test strip.
- 15. (Currently Amended) An optical meter that can determine when sample has been applied to the surface of a test strip inserted into it, said meter comprising:

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- (a) means for collecting reflectance data from a region of said meter occupied by a sample application location of said test strip when said test strip is present in said meter, wherein said reflectance data is collected over a period of time ranging from a time prior to introduction of said test strip into said optical meter to a time after application of said sample to said sample application location, wherein said means comprises:
 - (i) a light source for irradiating said region of said meter with light of wavelength ranging from about 550 to 590nm; and
 - (ii) a detector for detecting reflected light from said region of said meter;
 - (b) means for comparing said reflectance data to a reference value to obtain a sample present signal; and
- (c) means for actuating a fluid sample movement means of said meter in response to said sample present signal.
- 16. (Original) The optical meter according to Claim 15, wherein said fluid movement means is a bladder depressing means.
- 17. (Original) The optical meter according to Claim 15, wherein said test strip is present in said meter.
- 18. (Original) The optical meter according to Claim 17, wherein said test strip is a non-porous test strip.
- 19. (Cancelled) An optical meter that can determine when sample has been applied to the surface of a test strip inserted into it, said meter comprising:
- (a) means for collecting reflectance data substantially as represented in Figure 6E from a region of said meter occupied by a sample application location of said test strip when present in said meter, wherein said means comprises:
 - (i) a light source for irradiating said region of said meter; and
 - (ii) a detector for detecting reflected light from said region of said meter;
 - (b) means for comparing said reflectance data to a reference value to obtain a sample present signal; and
 - (c) means for actuating a fluid sample movement means of said test strip in response to said

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sample present signal.

- 20. (Cancelled) The optical meter according to Claim 19, wherein said light source is a source of visible light.
- 21. (Cancelled) The optical meter according to Claim 20, wherein said light has a wavelength ranging from about 550nm to 590nm.
- 22. (Cancelled) The optical meter according to Claim 19, wherein said meter further comprises said test strip.